We Can Quit Together

Look inside to find tools you need to ditch tobacco and live a healthier, happier life.
Introduction

Lung cancer is a leading cause of death among Latinos across the nation. Smoking, which has been found to cause 95% of the cases of lung cancers, as well as other health maladies, is commonplace among young Latino adults.

But there is good news: Latinos can quit smoking.

And this new booklet, ¡Buena Vida! A Guide to Help You Quit Smoking, provides information, tools and tips for smokers to quit smoking. It tells the stories of five Latinos who have quit, the experiences they faced and the methods they used to quit.

Also, this booklet has information about a telephone number (1-877-YES-QUIT or 1-877-937-7848) for people to call to get personalized attention from trained health counselors.

Many people have quit smoking. You can, too!

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If They Can Quit, You Can, Too

Ladies and gentlemen, can I please have your attention. I’ve just been handed an urgent news story and I need all of you to stop what you’re doing and listen:

QUITTING SMOKING TAKES PRACTICE.

In fact, reading this booklet may not be enough. It often takes several tries. But you learn something new each time you try. It takes willpower and strength to beat your addiction to nicotine. You have the power!

Just take a look at the five people featured in this booklet – Rosalie Rodriguez, Vicente Escobedo, Briggs Reschke, Estefanía Villareal, and Rafael Chavez. Like you, they all thought about quitting, prepared for it, took action, and quit for good. They took different paths to get there, but quitting smoking made them instantly healthier and more energized, and their home, work and social lives improved drastically. It wasn’t easy for any of them to quit, but they all prepared and took action to achieve and maintain their goals, and their lives improved as a result.

Remember that millions of other people also have quit smoking for good. You can be one of them, too!

“I think I’m a little bit healthier for not smoking... I don’t have those urges to just go outside to smoke. I have other things to do that I can do with my kids, other than having a cigarette, [like] spending more time with them, focusing on them.”

– Vicente Escobedo
Rosalie Rodriguez has been a smoker for the past 14 years — pretty much all of her adult life. Several things got her thinking about quitting.

Her father, a smoker for 38 years, developed bladder cancer, so she quit smoking to lower her risk of cancer.

Her 14-year-old son was another reason to quit.

“I’m doing it for health reasons because I want to be there as long as I can to see my son and his kids and to have a longer life.”

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**Things To Think About Before You Quit**

- Decide for sure that you want to quit. Promise yourself that you’ll do it. It’s OK to have mixed feelings. Don’t let that stop you.
- Find reasons to quit that are important to you.
- Write down all the reasons you want to quit:
  - __________________________________________
  - __________________________________________
  - __________________________________________
  - __________________________________________
  - __________________________________________
  - __________________________________________
  - __________________________________________
- Think of more than just health reasons. Check the boxes that apply to you.
  - “I will…”
    - [ ] Have more money to spend.
    - [ ] Have whiter teeth, fresher breath and fewer coughs.
    - [ ] Make my partner/friends/family/co-workers proud of me.
    - [ ] Be energized, with better focus.
    - [ ] Lower my risk for cancer, heart attacks, strokes, early death, cataracts, and skin wrinkling.
    - [ ] Be proud of myself.
    - [ ] Be a better role model for others.
    - [ ] No longer expose others to my secondhand smoke.
    - [ ] Feel healthier right away.
The Benefits of Not Smoking

You know that smoking increases your risk of health problems. But you can cut down your risk by quitting.

Smokers who successfully quit smoking know that they have the ability to quit. It may not be easy for everyone because nicotine is highly addictive.

Not every quitting method works for everyone. It may take several attempts, but every quit attempt brings you closer to quitting for good.

Just keep in mind that you can quit, just like Rosalie, Vicente, Briggs, Estefanía, and Rafael shown in this booklet.

As long as you prepare yourself, you can quit. It does not matter your age, health, or how long you’ve been smoking.

Vicente Escobedo, 21, is a father of two daughters and a resource specialist for the San Antonio Fatherhood Campaign, where he helps mentor young fathers to make healthy, strong families.

He quit smoking after his daughter said, “Daddy, you smell ugly – you smell like smoke.”

“I have to take care of my family. I have to worry about myself in the future. Am I gonna be healthy enough to take care of them?”

Now he can spend extra money on his family. He has more energy to run with his girls, and he’s a better role model.

He also worried that if he didn’t quit, his daughter might grow up and smoke, too. “And then there’s that whole thing coming to bite me in the back, so that’s another thing that I worry about too.”
ike many smokers, Briggs Reschke, a social worker, reached the point where he wanted to quit, but he knew desire alone might not be enough. So he called the 1-877-YES-QUIT (1-877-937-7848) line and got advice to set a quit date. Then he got a lot of help from his family and friends.

His co-workers all agreed to “give up something” while Briggs was quitting tobacco. One cut up personal credit cards. Another stopped drinking sodas. Another vowed to quit biting her nails. “We were supporting each other, keeping each other accountable,” he said.

As many Hispanic mothers do, Brigg’s mother checked on him frequently and they talked on the phone when he was feeling urges to smoke. Staying on the phone with her until the urge passed helped him a lot, too.

Once you’ve made the decision to quit, pick a date within the next two weeks to quit smoking. This will give you enough time to get ready to quit, but it’s not too long that you will lose your drive to quit.

Think about choosing a special day like a birthday, anniversary, Mother’s Day, or New Year’s Day.

If you smoke at work, quit on the weekend. That way you’ll already be cigarette-free when you return.

My Quit Date is:

Get a little help from your friends

Becoming a nonsmoker is easier if you get support from friends, family, and co-workers. Let them know you are getting ready to quit and specifically ask for their help.

Good friends will help you with anything, and they won’t think bad about you if you don’t succeed this time – they’ll just be there for you next time you try. Tell your family and friends you might be tense for a while, so they can help you and know what to expect.

Just like Briggs found out, his family called him often to offer their help, which is important when you feel an urge to smoke. His work friends also went the extra mile to help him prepare, cope with the urges, and quit for good. Even his friends who smoke understood his decision to quit, and helped him by not smoking in his presence.

The Day You Quit

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Think about choosing a special day like a birthday, anniversary, Mother’s Day, or New Year’s Day.

If you smoke at work, quit on the weekend. That way you’ll already be cigarette-free when you return.

My Quit Date is:
Know Your Triggers

Certain things trigger, or turn on, your need for a cigarette. They can be moods, feelings, places, or things you do. Think about what might tempt you to smoke.

Put a check next to things that tempt you to smoke:

- Feeling stressed
- Talking on the phone
- Watching TV
- Finishing a meal
- Taking a work break
- Being with other smokers
- Cooling off after a fight
- Seeing someone else smoke
- Feeling down
- Drinking alcohol
- Driving your car
- Playing cards
- Drinking coffee
- Feeling lonely
- After having sex

Other triggers:
- ______________________________________
- ______________________________________
- ______________________________________

Meet your triggers head-on

- Stay away from places where smoking is allowed.
- Keep your mouth and hands busy with a toothpick, sugarfree lollipop, or straw. Carry a water bottle.
- Stay away from people who smoke.
- Put something else in your mouth (sugarfree gum) and snack on a carrot or celery stick.
- Drink less or stay away from alcohol (which often makes people want to smoke).

Briggs knew his triggers – mainly stress and boredom. “Sometimes I had to get out and just walk around the parking lot a couple of times,” he recalled, “and the craving would pass.”

Also, from past experience trying to quit smoking, Briggs knew that lozenges were helpful, so he kept some on hand. He used coffee stir sticks and candy as cigarette substitutes, too. Also, being around other smokers was a trigger, so he avoided them for a while.

Briggs had a goal and was prepared. And it worked. As time passed, his cravings for a smoke eased.
There will be challenges after you quit. Your first three months will be hardest. It helps to anticipate when you need a cigarette most.

Review your triggers on the last page when you are tempted to smoke. Plan for how to deal with the urge before it hits.

You can also expect feelings of withdrawal. It is your body’s way of telling you it’s learning to be smoke-free. These feelings will go away in time.

Try these tips, once you quit

- Make things clean and fresh at work, in your car, and at home. Clean your clothes and car. Buy yourself flowers. You will enjoy their scent as your sense of smell returns.
- Throw away all your cigarettes, matches, lighters and ashtrays. Remember the ashtray and lighter in your car!
- Have a dentist clean your teeth to get rid of smoking stains. See how great they look. Try to keep them that way.

Talk to your doctor about getting help to quit

Quitting “cold turkey” isn’t your only choice. A doctor, dentist or pharmacist can advise you on additional help.

stefanía Villareal, 21, recently graduated from UT San Antonio with a degree in marketing and now works for an insurance company. She wants to eventually teach elementary school children.

“I first quit (smoking) during weekdays. After I quit, I loved getting up in the morning and not having problems with my throat. And then my hair, my clothes, everything didn’t smell like cigarettes anymore”, she said. “Yes! How awesome. I felt really great.

“I like how I wake up. I’m going to stay quit on the weekends, too. I can, I can. And during nights I wanted to die [for a cigarette], but I thought it was worth it because in the morning I’m going to think, ‘Yes! How great that I didn’t smoke.’ It is one day at a time. After a while you get used to it, like everything.”
Once you’ve succeeded quitting, the goal is to maintain it. As Estefanía said, it’s one day at a time.

Drinking six to eight glasses of water a day and starting a light exercise routine helps your lungs and heart get back in shape, and clean off the nicotine faster. Just starting with 20-minute walks and slowly increase until you walk 30 or 40 minutes a day will greatly help your body, and will prevent you from gaining weight.

Learning to control stress also helps greatly. Taking deep breaths and other relaxation techniques will help.

Rafael, Estefanía, Briggs, Vicente and Rosalie are all great people that live normal lives, just like you. They all struggled with smoking, and worked hard to quit and remain smoke-free. But they quit smoking, and you can, too. With some planning and help, you are capable of becoming smoke-free.

Rafael Chavez, a master sergeant at Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio, was destined to be a Dallas Cowboys fan growing up in Mission, Texas, where Coach Tom Landry was born a legend.

But he was unlike Landry in that he smoked since age 15.

Years later, Chavez decided to start over and quit smoking for good. He’s been smokeless for six months – and he says he feels like he has scored a Super Bowl touchdown.

“[It’s like] scoring in the Super Bowl; you’re not doing it for the fans. You’re not doing it for anyone. You’re doing it for yourself because the reason you smoke is for yourself,” he said. “You have to do it for yourself and then others will see the results.”
Quotes from Winners

“Wherever you’re going to go, take a pack of tricks, as they call it. Every time you think about smoking a cigarette, bring out your bag of tricks – like gum or a straw.”
–Rosalie

“The cigarettes are expensive. I know I didn’t want to buy ‘em. I have more money now! I got more money to spend on my daughters and my wife.”
–Vicente

“I feel like I have more energy. I don’t feel tired as much. It’s kind of like having a weight lifted off of you.”
–Briggs

“I just feel, I don’t know, I just feel happy.”
–Estefanía
Quotes from Winners

“By quitting, you are basically taking charge of your life and saying, ‘I will not kill myself.’ I want to live a life that I can enjoy.”
–Rafael

“It’s one day at a time. After a while you get used to it, like everything.”
–Estefanía

“I’m thinking positive and I’m thinking that I can succeed.”
–Rosalie

“It’s just an addiction and I don’t know a better way to put it. It’s, you know, why kill yourself by inhaling smoke? Because, you know, that’s all it’s doing. It’s just killing you slowly.”
–Briggs
Your family and friends can help you quit smoking.

For additional information or support, you can call the free ACS Quitline to speak with trained counselors and get services personally tailored for you.

Call Today at: **1-877-YES-QUIT** (1-877-937-7848)